

New Books.

The Geologist's Text Book. By PROFESSOR ARTHUR VAN VOORST, London: 1845.

A KNOWLEDGE of the principles of geology is almost essential to engineers and architects. In making roads, and canals, tunnelling, the selection of sites, and the materials for buildings, digging for water, and draining lands, it will be found of the utmost value. It is not to be expected, neither is it necessary, that every architect should be a professed geologist; but he should have such a general knowledge of the science as shall show him where to go for information when the special occasion arises, and how to avail himself of it efficiently.

The publication before us is not intended for those who have no previous acquaintance with the study, but as a companion in the field or closet to a student who has been taught the principles, but is not yet familiar with the practice, of the subject. In fact, it is an analysis, and a very able one, of a larger work on geology by the same author,—a summary of the actual condition of the science, and an intimation of how far conclusions in vogue may be admitted as sound, and acted on with confidence. It is an able work, and may be safely consulted.

A Report of the Proceedings of the British Archaeological Association, at the first General Meeting held at Canterbury. By ALFRED JOHN DENKIN. J. Russell Smith, London: 1845.

THIS volume, of which only 150 copies have been printed, contains a full and very correct account of all that occurred at Canterbury in September last, and cannot fail to be acceptable as a record, to those who attended. Sir William Betham's paper, "On the origin of Idolatry;" the Rev. J. B. Deane's valuable essay "On the early sepulchral remains extant in Great Britain;" Mr. Lowe's paper "On the Pelham Bunker;" and the result of Mr. Stapleton's erudite researches illustrative of the succession to the barony of William of Arques; are given at considerable length. The most interesting part of its contents to us is the translation of Gervase's account of the burning of the ancient cathedral of Canterbury in the year 1174, and its re-erection in 1175-1184, by Mr. Edward Cresy, jun.; to which we may perhaps return on another occasion. The editor states in the preface, what is probably true, that "he had no pecuniary object in printing this report, else he might have realized a large sum by extending the impressions;" but was actuated solely by a desire to pay a tribute to those gentlemen who either actually attended at Canterbury, or by their papers or gifts contributed to its success.

The future fate of this association is somewhat doubtful; unfortunately at this moment there are two committees in existence carrying on its business, and we all know the insecurity of two stools. Those who wish well to the association will endeavour to remove existing difficulties, aid by persuading each party to yield something, and in effecting an harmonious coalition.

CONTINENTAL ARCHITECTURE.—Professor Gartner of Munich, is about to follow the examples set by Schinkel and Klenze, in publishing a series of all the principal buildings he has executed. The professor succeeded Klenze as the king's special architect, and has erected most of the recent monumental structures in the Bavarian capital. The work will doubtless be an interesting and valuable addition to the architect's library.

PRINCE ALBERT.—His Royal Highness continues to manifest considerable interest in matters of science and art. A few days since, after presiding at a meeting of the commission for promoting the fine arts in the rebuilding of the Palace of Westminster, the Prince went over the new structure with Mr. Barry and the contractor. Last Saturday evening, his Royal Highness visited Lord Northampton and the fellows of the Royal Society, and examined with much apparent pleasure, the various inventions and works of art which were exhibited. We should like to see the Prince occasionally call around him at the palace some of our poets, artists, and men of science. The names of such, strange to say, are never seen in the list of the "royal dinner party."

Correspondence.

THE OFFICIAL REFEREES.

SIR,—The letter of your correspondent "Censor" will, I think, justify me in troubling you with a few remarks upon the subject of the manner in which business is conducted by the Trafalgar-square "Board." "Censor," it would appear from his letter, expects that the referees and the registrar should be continually on view to any person who may wish to look at them. On this point, since reading his letter, I have thought much, and on looking to "the Act" I find that one of its primary objects is to prevent, for the future, the "diversity of practice" that has hitherto existed. Now, Sir, I should like to ask "Censor" whether if he were to be permitted at all times to see the referees, this object would not in all probability be defeated; it could not be expected that they should be always together, and if they were not so, it would be quite possible for a man to obtain orders diametrically opposing each other from the "referees," and even if it were possible for these gentlemen (they being in the same profession) always to see things in the same light, what is to be done about the registrar? he has the power of refusing to sanction their proceedings if, in his opinion, they are contrary to law. Assuming, therefore, that I am correct in my premises, what arrangement can be better than that all matters should be determined by the referees and the registrar sitting as a board? In this manner the chances are, that diversity of practice will not, at all events, find its way to head quarters. Again, the Act requires that all cases should be registered; how, I would ask, could this be done if the business were half transacted in the private rooms of the referees, without the knowledge of the registrar? It should also, I think, be borne in mind that the referees are referees, and that in consequence it would be highly improper for them to hold any conversation with one person, upon a matter whereon they may afterwards have to decide as judges between him and others. If I understand "Censor," he would have us believe, that so great is the desire to obtain fees, that even the clerk cannot be seen without a fee. This appears to me to be a particularly unfair part of his letter. The professional character of the gentlemen in question ought to have protected them from such a charge; but has "Censor" really been made to pay for his conversation with the clerk? If he has, he has been treated very differently from myself or any of my acquaintances: a scale of fees hangs up in the waiting-room, but no unnecessary allusion thereto has ever been made to me by the gentlemen that I have seen. Much more might be said upon the subject of "Censor's" communication, but I fear that my letter has already exceeded the limits that will enable you to give it a corner in your valuable journal.

I am, Sir, &c.

FAIRPLAY.

COMPETITION—CANTERBURY WORKHOUSE.

SIR,—The profession are, I think, more indebted to the articles in your valuable pages on the subject of competition, than to all the other sources they now have of obtaining or diffusing information. May I request you to have a vigilant eye on the Canterbury Incorporation.

I first saw the notice in your number of February 22nd. A fortnight only was given to prepare the plans. Not too much, if an architect has any thing else to do. I accordingly wrote by the same night's post for information, and waited day by day for an answer, till, in fact, I gave the matter up. However, on Saturday last, I received (too late to be answered by that night's post), a letter from Canterbury, wherein I was informed that the writer had enclosed me a sketch of the ground and all other particulars. Well, I thought this civility came rather too late, for it only left me four days to make my designs, as on Friday they must have gone down to be opened on Saturday; but fancy my dismay, Sir, when I went to look further, there was neither sketch, nor particulars, in the envelope. In fact, all I had was, "Sir, I have the honour to enclose"—and the enclosed was—nothing!!—Now I must have written again to Canterbury, explaining the mistake, and must have received

my answer back; and I should like to know what time I should then have had left. Pray keep your eye on the Canterbury Incorporation;—there will be something curious in that matter before they have done. The official, whoever it was, taken half the time allotted to do all the work to answer a letter; and then he sends me a nice little parcel of moonshine. Again I say, pray keep your eye on the Canterbury Incorporation!!—I am, Sir, &c.,

AN ARCHITECT.

IMPURE AIR FROM SEWERS.

SIR,—In THE BUILDER of Feb. 15, I was pleased to read a communication by Mr. G. Hawkins, at the Institute of Architects, on the subject of sewerage. Much credit is due to that gentleman for his valuable and gratifying information; but a great, if not the greatest, evil was unnoticed,—that is, with regard to the most efficacious means of preventing the effluvia, and impure air or gas, arising or escaping from the sewer through the gratings in the street.

The reports of the most eminent physicians prove that during the time the cholera raged in England, the greatest number of victims to that disease was to be found in the immediate neighbourhood of open sewers, and near those gratings from which escaped the impure air, or gas, generated in the covered sewers which are forced under our streets. My attention was first seriously drawn to this subject by my occupying a house near one of those gratings, from which the effluvia arising frequently compelled me to close my windows in the summer. I propose, where the gratings now are, to insert an aqueduct which will admit all fluid to pass freely, while it entirely prevents all impure air from ascending from the sewers; it is of trifling cost, and cannot be put out of order; also to erect ornamental or plain shafts at suitable places, 15 feet or 20 feet high, through which the impure air may escape. With your permission, I will send you a model of an aqueduct, and hope soon that the inhabitants of the metropolis (especially of some parts of it) may not have to complain of the ill-effect produced by the noxious gas arising from the sewers.

I am, Sir, &c.,

W. ROWLAND.

14, Passmore-st., Piccolo, Feb. 26, 1845.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL.

SIR,—As an old inhabitant of Chelsea, also a constant reader of your valuable publication, I was much pleased with your illustration on page 102, having frequently admired the iron lamp-posts of the hospital, for there are two of them; one is in the east court, which is surrounded by shrubberies, and seems to have escaped the observation of your contributor, who has given us so perfect a sketch of the one in the west court; they are, however, fac-similes of each other.

I should like to draw the attention of "C." or Mr. C. J. Richardson, who has given us a proof of his skill in such works, to the chimney-piece in the state-room of the hospital, which is an exquisite work of military trophies, carved in oak.

"C." having stated the opinion of several architects of the chapel's superiority over that of Greenwich, it is to be lamented the commissioners suffer it to remain in the very dirty state in which it is at present. A few years back there was a magnificent sounding-board over the pulpit, of inlaid woods, similar to the altar-piece, but this has been removed, and converted to a much more ignoble purpose by the present clerk of the works for his own use.

There are some remarks in another paper by "E. H." that room might be found in the hospital for some of the monuments of the Abber. I think it cannot be known to the commissioners that a beautiful painting by West now lies rolled up in the gallery of the great hall, for want of room, it is said, to hang it; it was hung for a short time, on its first arrival, on one side of the hall, against the windows. The heat of the sun causing the paint to blister, the picture was taken down and placed in its present position, where, if not speedily released, it will rot unseen: the subject is, I believe, the victories of the Duke of Wellington, and its size 35 feet by 90 feet.

I am, Sir, &c.,

W.